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SLEEP IN THE NEUROPSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION OF PATIENTS WITH DEMENTIA DUE TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

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Objectives: To evaluate the amount of sleep of patients with Alzheimer's disease, as well as which factors might influence their sleep patterns.

Methods: A total of 131 patients with dementia due to Alzheimer's disease followed at the Behavioural Neurology Section of *Hospital São Paulo, Escola Paulista de Medicina*, Federal University of São Paulo – UNIFESP were tested by way of: Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), severe MMSE, 15-point Clock Drawing Test (CDT), Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR), Neuropsychiatric Inventory (NPI – version with 10 items), Katz's (ADL) and Lawton's (IADL) functional assessments, and the Brazilian Version of the Zarit Caregiver Burden Interview (ZBI). Schooling and cerebrovascular risk factors (systemic hypertension, diabetes *mellitus*, hypercholesterolemia, obesity) were also assessed. Patients had to answer if their sleep was pleasing, what factors might interfere with it, and the usual amount of time slept daily. Significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Among all 131 patients, 88 were female (67.2%) and 43 were male (32.8%), 113 (86.2%) had systemic hypertension, 36 (27.5%) had diabetes *mellitus*, and 92 (70.2%) had hypercholesterolemia, all of them under treatment; mean weight was 63.7 ± 12.9 kgf, mean height was 156.6 ± 9.5 cm, mean waist circumference was 95.1 ± 12.3 cm, and mean body mass index was 25.9 ± 4.5 kg/m²; mean estimated age of Alzheimer's disease onset was 71.9 ± 6.6 years, mean schooling was 4.5 ± 3.7 years, and mean scores for the tests were: MMSE 15.7 ± 6.0 ; severe MMSE 26.4 ± 4.3 ; CDT 6.0 ± 4.6 ; CDR 1.8 ± 0.7 ; NPI 21.6 ± 16.6 ; ADL 4.8 ± 1.7 ; IADL 13.9 ± 5.1 ; and ZBI 15.5 ± 10.5 . Mean daily length of sleep was 8.9 ± 1.8 hours; 24 patients (18.32%) reported unsatisfactory sleep, more often when they slept for less than 8 hours per day ($p = 0.016$). Mean age at Alzheimer's disease onset ($p = 0.529$), cerebrovascular risk, gender ($p = 0.366$), and scores for MMSE ($p = 0.809$), severe MMSE ($p = 0.294$), CDT ($p = 0.942$), CDR ($p = 0.696$), ZBI ($p = 0.106$), ADL ($p = 0.622$) and IADL ($p = 0.072$) were not predictive of sleep disorders. Higher NPI scores ($p = 0.003$) and less than 4 years of schooling ($p = 0.024$) predicted reports of unsatisfactory sleep.

Conclusion: Low schooling impacts the evolution of patients with Alzheimer's disease as much as their sleep patterns, which are also affected by neuropsychiatric symptoms; satisfactory sleep seems to be related to its length for these patients.

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